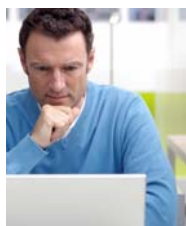


# How To Find Your Future Career

The Career Development process outlines the steps to follow to find your future career. Completing the steps in chronological order (each step paving the way for the next) will help you make an informed career choice - and maximize your chances for finding professional employment that's a good match for you. Even if you've already decided on a career, it helps to affirm your decision by going through each of the steps.

Following are the four phases of the Career Development process and the steps involved in each. Under each phase you will find a list of tasks to complete that phase, and the Career Center resources available to help you carry them out.

## PHASE 1 – CONDUCT A SELF ASSESSMENT



When deciding on a major and a career path, it helps to understand yourself. Start by exploring the following areas:

**Interests** – Make note of activities, hobbies and academic subjects you enjoy.

**Skills** – Identify natural talents, acquired skills and academic activities in which you excel.

**Values** – Clarify work-related factors and life-style preferences important for your career satisfaction.

**Personality** – Discover your unique personal characteristics, work preferences, and decision-making style.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT PHASE 1

- Consult with your career counselor regarding a comprehensive assessment of your interests, skills, values and personality style.
- View Career Center online seminar: "Finding a Career that Fits" at [www.career.usf.edu](http://www.career.usf.edu).
- Use online career guidance programs and assessment surveys, which can be found at [www.career.usf.edu](http://www.career.usf.edu). Then discuss the results with your career counselor.
- Take classes related to your field of interest.
- Identify and develop skills through career-related employment and/or involvement in student organizations or volunteer work.

## PHASE 2 – EXPLORE OCCUPATIONS

This phase of career development requires that you gather specific information on occupations that interest you, including education and training needed.

**Step 1 – Research occupations of interest.** Obtain the following information:

- Nature of work involved
- Working conditions
- Education and training needed
- Job outlook and expected earnings
- Reported advantages and disadvantages
- Related occupations



**Step 2 – Inquire about relevant education.**

Learn about specific majors, including the types of courses needed, knowledge gained from this major, and what skills will be developed.

**Step 3 – Get hands-on experience.**

Gain career-related experience to test out the career you're considering. Participate in Cooperative Education or an internship, work as a volunteer, and/or join academic student organizations.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT PHASE 2

- Consult with your career counselor, use the Career Center reference library, and use the internet to research occupations.
- Obtain an informational interview with professionals in the career you're considering (how-to information can be found in DVDs and books in the Career Center Library).
- Talk with faculty and academic advisors about college majors for careers that interest you.
- Review requirements for selected majors in the USF online catalog.
- Explore graduate and professional school options.

## PHASE 3 – CHOOSE A CAREER AND MAJOR

You should now be ready to use information from Phases 1 and 2 to determine career options and goals, and decide on a major.

- **Step 1 – Create a list of several career fields and jobs within the fields that interest you most**, based on the results of your self-assessment and occupational exploration. (Example: Field – Psychology. Related jobs: recreation director, sales, counselor, case worker, admissions rep, program coordinator, etc.)
- **Step 2 – Gather detailed information about each career field and job you've listed.**
- **Step 3 – Narrow the field by identifying 2 - 5 of the most appealing career fields and jobs on your list** and rank them based on information about yourself obtained from Self-Assessment and Occupational Exploration phases.
- **Step 4 – Re-examine your list periodically.** Evaluate the career fields and jobs that seem to be the best fit for you.
- **Step 5 – Decide on a career** and then a major that supports your career choice.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT PHASE 3

- ❑ Create a detailed decision-making plan.
- ❑ Consult with your career counselor in the Career Center about areas of indecision.
- ❑ Talk with your career counselor about getting career-related experience.
- ❑ Continue with informational interviews if necessary.
- ❑ Get feedback from faculty members, academic advisors, employers, family and friends about your plans.
- ❑ Choose a career field and select the major that best prepares you for that career.

## PHASE 4 – SEARCH FOR EMPLOYMENT

This phase involves developing and carrying out a customized job search campaign to obtain a professional position in your chosen career field.

### Step 1 – Prepare for your job search

- Determine a specific “career objective.”
- Create an effective resume.
- Identify potential employers.
- Research and target preferred employers.
- Plan strategies for contacting employers.
- Practice interview skills.
- Obtain your professional interview attire.

### Step 2 – Contact targeted list of employers

Apply for interviews.

### Step 3 – Participate in interviews.

- Send a thank-you letter after the interview.
- Continue to followup afterwards.

### Step 4 – Accept an offer

- Evaluate the offer.
- Negotiate salary and benefits.
- Send a letter of acceptance or declination.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT PHASE 4

- ❑ Put your job search plan on paper.
- ❑ View online seminars and/or attend workshops in the Career Center.  
For dates/times go to [www.career.usf.edu](http://www.career.usf.edu)
- ❑ Have your resume critiqued by your Career Counselor.
- ❑ Participate in a practice interview (the Career Center uses Virtual Video Interview for practice interviews).
- ❑ Open a Career Connections account in the Career Center to apply for online job listings.
- ❑ Network and cultivate contacts with hiring employers.
- ❑ Research employer profiles via their websites, trade journals, internet searches, annual reports.
- ❑ Attend campus career fairs and participate in the Career Center's On-campus Interview program.

